

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9867

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, PINS, CI

SUBJECT: STATEMENT FOR INCLUSION IN SENATOR KENNEDY'S SUBCOMMITTEE
HEARINGS

FOR DEPASSTSEC SHLAUDEMAN ARA FROM POPPER

REF: ISAACS-POPPER LETTER JULY 30

1. UNLESS DEPARTMENT PERCEIVES OBJECTION, PLEASE SUBMIT
FOLLOWING STATEMENT TO SENATE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE AS
ARRANGED BY YOU WITH SENATOR KENNEDY AT JULY 23 HEARING ON
"HUMANITARIAN PROBLEMS IN CHILE":

BEGIN TEXT

I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT TO THE
SUBCOMMITTEE REGARDING COMMENTS MADE DURING THE HEARING OF JULY 23
RELATING TO THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO AND TO ME AS AMBASSADOR.

CHARGES THAT THE EMBASSY, AND I PERSONALLY, ARE UNCONCERNED OR
INDIFFERENT REGARDING RIGHTS ISSUES IN CHILE ARE UNFOUNDED. NO
MATTER OCCUPIES MORE OF MY TIME OR PRESENTS GREATER DIFFICULTIES.

DURING MUCH OF MY CAREER I HAVE BEEN DEALING WITH HUMAN RIGHTS
PROBLEMS IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. I DO NOT BELIEVE ANYONE CAN
RIGHTLY SAY THAT I AM INSENSITIVE TO THEM.

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MUCH OF THE CRITICISM STEMS FROM A DIFFERENCE IN PERCEPTION

REGARDING THE TASK OF A FOREIGN EMBASSY IN AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, IN CIRCUMSTANCES OF THIS KIND. UNLIKE VISITORS WHO COME TO OBSERVE AND THEN DEPART, OR UNOFFICIAL OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION SPOKESMEN LOCATED OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY, WE WHO REMAIN ON THE SPOT MUST WEIGHT VERY CAREFULLY THE EFFECT OUR ACTIONS WILL HAVE ON OUR CONTINUING ABILITY TO PURSUE OUR COUNTRY'S OBJECTIVES.

IT IS MY DUTY, AND THE DUTY OF THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO, TO ATTEND TO THE ENTIRE RANGE OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT POLICY WITH RESPECT TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE. ONE ELEMENT IN THAT RANGE OF POLICY--BUT NOT THE ONLY ELEMENT -- INCLUDES THE EXPRESSION OF OUR CONCERN, IN APPROPRIATE AND USEFUL WAYS, REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS. MY STAFF AND I HAVE SOUGHT TO CARRY OUT UNITED STATES POLICY AS FAITHFULLY AND AS CONSISTENTLY AS WE CAN, IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.

IN THE COURSE OF EMBASSY ACTIVITIES IN SANTIAGO, I HAVE MADE CLEAR TO CHILEAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AT HIGH LEVELS THE VIEWS OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. I HAVE ALSO PERSONALLY BEEN IN CONTACT WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS, DEFENSE ATTORNEYS FOR DETAINEES, REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN CHILE, AND CHILEAN POLITICAL LEADERS REGARDING THESE MATTERS. MEMBERS OF MY STAFF MAINTAIN SIMILAR CONTACTS. TO DIVULGE DETAILS OF THE CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD IN THIS CONNECTION WOULD BE TO VIOLATE CONFIDENCES AND TO UNDERCUT THE BENEFITS WHICH FLOW FROM QUIET DIPLOMATIC DISCOURSE.

IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY COVERAGE OF THE RECENT AIR FORCE TRIALS IN CHILE WAS INADEQUATE. IN FACT, I ASSIGNED EMBASSY OFFICERS TO THE TASK OF ATTENDING THE TRIALS ON A PERIODIC BASIS AND REPORTING FULLY ON THEM. SINCE THE TRIALS WERE AMPLY COVERED EACH DAY IN THE PRESS, ATTENDANCE AT ALL SESSIONS DURING THE SEVEN WEEKS THE TRIALS LASTED WOULD NOT HAVE REPRESENTED THE BEST USE OF THEIR TIME. WHILE MR. RAMSEY CLARK AND JUDGE BOOTH WERE IN SANTIAGO, EMBASSY OFFICERS ASSISTED THEM AT THE TRIALS, AS TRANSLATORS AND OTHERWISE.

IN THIS AND ALL OTHER RESPECTS, THIS EMBASSY HAS KEPT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AS FULLY INFORMED AS IT COULD OF ALL DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING HUMAN RIGHTS, AS THEY HAVE OCCURRED IN CHILE. I AM CONVINCED THAT THE EMBASSY IS PROVIDING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT THE INFORMATION IT REQUIRES FOR POLICY AND OPERATIONAL PURPOSES. I BELIEVE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAT, ACROSS THE BOARD, OUR VERY ABLE REPORTING OFFICERS ARE DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB OF FACT-FINDING AND ANALYSIS.

OBVIOUSLY THERE ARE LIMITS TO WHAT I PERSONALLY OR THIS EMBASSY AS AN INSTITUTION, CAN DO WITHOUT SERIOUSLY IMPAIRING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE AMERICAN NATIONAL INTEREST IN CHILE. IT WOULD NOT BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME PERSONALLY TO ATTEND TRIALS, VISIT DETAINEES, OR ARRANGE FOR AMERICAN DOCTORS TO SEE CHILEAN PRISONERS,

AND I HAVE NOT DONE SO. ACTIONS OF THIS CHARACTER, TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY WERE PERCEIVED AS INTERVENTION IN CHILEAN AFFAIRS, WOULD ON BALANCE BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE.

A LARGE NUMBER OF GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS, OF DIFFERING POINTS OF VIEW, HAVE VISITED CHILE TO LOOK INTO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS, AND THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN GENEROUS IN PROVIDING THEM ACCESS TO WHAT THEY WISHED TO SEE. WE HAVE TRIED TO BE UNIFORMLY HELPFUL TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE APPROACHED THE EMBASSY, WHATEVER THEIR ORIENTATION. I HAVE INVITED EACH OF THEM TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION IN CHILE WITH ME AT LEAST ONCE WHILE THEY WERE IN SANTIAGO; I HAVE DETAILED AN EMBASSY OFFICER TO HELP EACH OF THEM DESIRING ASSISTANCE; THE EMBASSY HAS ADVISED THEM AS TO THE INDIVIDUALS THEY MIGHT USEFULLY APPROACH IN THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT, AND HAS AT TIMES ARRANGED FOR MEETINGS AND, TO THE EXTENT OF OUR ABILITY, WE HAVE FURNISHED OTHER TYPES OF ASSISTANCE. I HAVE NOT PERSONALLY INTERCEDED WITH THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT TO MAKE APPOINTMENTS FOR AMERICAN VISITORS, SINCE ALL OF THEM HAVE HAD ACCESS, USUALLY WITH EMBASSY ASSISTANCE, TO THESE OFFICIALS.

I SHOULD LIKE TO ADD A WORD WITH RESPECT TO COMMENTS MADE AT THE HEARING REGARDING ASYLUM AND REFUGEES.

THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO CRITICISM FOR NOT HAVING ACCEPTED APPLICATIONS FOR ASYLUM ON ITS PREMISES IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, 1973. UNITED STATES POLICY WITH RESPECT TO FOREIGNERS SEEKING ASYLUM IN OUR EMBASSIES IS NOT DETERMINED IN SANTIAGO. THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT NORMALLY ACCEPT REQUESTS BY FOREIGNERS FOR ASYLUM IN ITS EMBASSIES ANYWHERE, EXCEPT IN CASE OF IMMINENT DANGER TO LIFE. TO MY KNOWLEDGE, NO SUCH CASE HAS ARISEN IN THE SANTIAGO EMBASSY.

IN THE SAME WAY, THE EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO FOLLOWS UNITED STATES LAW AND REGULATIONS AS REGARDS THE ADMISSION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF REFUGEES TO THE UNITED STATES. IN CONTRAST TO THE SITUATION WHICH EXISTS IN ISSUING NORMAL VISAS, OUR FREEDOM OF ACTION IN SUCH MATTERS IS VERY LIMITED. THERE IS A FURTHER CONSIDERATION: RELATIVELY FEW OF THE CHILEANS AND THIRD-COUNTRY NATIONALS WHO HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY FOR POLITICAL REASONS HAVE BEEN INTERESTED IN THE UNITED STATES AS A PREFERRED COUNTRY OF ASYLUM.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IS FURNISHING THE SUBCOMMITTEE A SEPARATE STATEMENT WITH REGARD TO THE CASE OF THE LATE MR. FRANK TERUGGI, JR. END TEXT

2. BEFORE SUBMITTING STATEMENT, I WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD CHECK OUT WITH EXPERTS PARAGRAPHS DEALING WITH ASYLUM AND REFUGEES, FOR TECHNICAL ACCURACY. IF THESE PARAGRAPHS CANNOT BE EASILY MODIFIED AS REQUIRED FOR ACCURACY, PLEASE DELETE THEM.

3. TRANSCRIPT AS SUPPLIED TO ME DOES NOT INCLUDE TEXT OF NOTES
SUBMITTED BY FRANK TERUGGI, SR. ACCORDINGLY, I MUST LEAVE IT TO
YOU TO JUDGE HOW MUCH OF A RESPONSE SHOULD BE MADE TO HIS
COMMENTS. I GATHER THAT AT MINIMUM WE WILL RESPOND TO MATTER
OF HANDLING OF LETTERS MR. TERUGGI, SR., GAVE ME. FOR MY PART,
I WOULD BE PERFECTLY HAPPY TO HAVE DEPARTMENT DECLASSIFY AND
SUBMIT TO SUBCOMMITTEE ALL BUT FIRST PARAGRAPH OF MY TELEGRAM
SANTIAGO 1163, MARCH 8, 1974, OR ANY PART OF IT, IF YOU THINK
IT DESIRABLE.

POPPER

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